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Message Text

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70
ACTION CU-03

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 USIA-15 /031 W
---------- 038481
R 301423Z OCT 74
FM AMEMBASSY LISBON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 891

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EO 11652: N/A
TAGS: SCUL
SUBJECT: CU/ARTS: PERFORMING GROUP REQUESTED FOR LISBON

REF: STATE 229173

1. EMBASSY APPRECIATES DEPARTMENT'S POSITIVE RESPONSE TO ITS PROPOSAL.

2. TOP-RATED MODERN DANCE COMPANY WOULD BE SUPER. PREFER JOSE LIMON COMPANY TO ALVIN AILEY'S, NOT BECAUSE IT IS BETTER BUT BECAUSE THE AILEY COMPANY WAS HERE MORE RECENTLY. LIMON COMPANY CONSIDERED TOP OF THE LINE BY PORTUGUESE. APPEARANCE HERE WOULD MAKE STRONG IMPACT.

3. CHAMBER AND ACADEMIC PERFORMING GROUPS WOULD NOT HAVE DESIRED IMPACT, NO MATTER HOW COMPETENT.

4. MODERN JAZZ QUARTET WOULD BE GREAT. ARTISTIC EXCEL-LENCE AND PROFESSIONAL INTEGRITY ARE OF THE HIGHEST ORDER. SAO CARLOS OPERA HOUSE TRYING TO DEVELOP NEW IMAGE FOR ITSELF. PERFORMANCE BY CONCERT-STYLE JAZZ ENSEMBLE LIKE THE MJQ WOULD SERVE SAO CARLOS' PURPOSE AND ASSOCIATE U.S. WITH UP-BEAT TREND. MJQ HAS OUTSTANDING RECORDING OF GERSHWIN'S "PORGY AND BESS." "PORGY" WILL BE RESTAGED AT SAO CARLOS IN FEBRUARY. WOULD BE NEAT TRICK IF WE COULD FOLLOW THE OPERA WITH A JAZZ CONCERT SAME PLACE IN STRING.

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5. BIG NAME INDIVIDUAL ARTIST WOULD HAVE LESS IMPACT

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THAN A GROUP BECAUSE THERE WOULD BE NOTHING UNUSUAL ABOUT HAVING ONE HERE. RUBENSTEIN, SERKIN, RESNIK HAVE ALL BEEN HERE WITHIN LAST TWO YEARS. ONLY RUBENSTEIN CAUSED A SPLASH. WE PUT BEVERLY SILLS IN THE SAME CATEGORY AS RUBENSTEIN. THE PORTUGUESE ARE CRAZY ABOUT OPERA. SILLS WOULD BE TREMENDOUS.

6. A PORTUGUESE PRODUCTION OF A BROADWAY MUSICAL WOULD BE SOMETHING NEW AND UNIQUELY AMERICAN. "KISS ME KATE" WAS THE FIRST AMERICAN MUSICAL TO BE DONE IN YUGOSLAVIA (1960). IT WAS CHOSEN BECAUSE THE BRIDGE FROM SHAKESPEARE TO PORTER IS NOT UNSPANABLE. CONDITIONS ARE RIGHT FOR A TRY AT THIS SORT OF THING HERE. THE VOICES ARE HERE. WHAT'S NEEDED IS AN AMERICAN DIRECTOR/CHOREOGRAPHER. HANYA HOLM, WHO CHOREOGRAPHED THE ORIGINAL "KATE", MAY BE ABLE TO SUGGEST SOMEONE, E.G. RAY HARRISON OF THE BOSTON SCHOOL OF BALLET.

7. THE NEW YORK CITY BALLET AND/OR AN ART EXHIBIT OF EXCEPTIONAL QUALITY (20 TO 30 PICTURES) WOULD HAVE EXTRAORDINARY IMPACT.

8. REALIZE SYMPHONE ORCHESTRAS, CLASSICAL BALLET COMPANIES, AND WORLD CLASS ART EXHIBITS COST A TON. EMBASSY WILLING ATTEMPT PERSUADE U.S. BUSINESS REPS IN PORTUGAL TO ASSIST WITH FINANCING SHOULD A FIRST-RATE SYMPHONY OR COMPANY DECIDE TO TOUR IN THIS PART OF THE WORLD IN THE NEXT YEAR OR SO.

9. FYI: THE GULBENKIAN FOUNDATION HAS BEEN ASKED BY THE KENNEDY CENTER IF IT WOULD BE INTERESTED IN HAVING AN EXPERIMENTAL OPERA GROUP IN 1976. THE OPERA GROUP WOULD PRESENT FOUR OPERAS: ONE BY LIGETTI; ANOTHER BY COURT; A THIRD, STILL IN THE WRITING STAGE, BY AN AMERICAN COMPOSER; AND THE FOURTH, WHAT THE KENNEDY CENTER DESCRIBES AS "A HIGHLY POLITICAL EXPERIMENTAL OPERA BASED ON THE TALES OF HOFFMANN," AUTHOR UNKNOWN. GULBENKIAN HAS ASKED IF THE EMBASSY WOULD BE INTERESTED IN CO-SPONSORING THE GROUP AND IN SHARING THE COST.

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ACTION REQUESTED: REQUEST DEPARTMENT CHECK WITH THE KENNEDY CENTER, GET A READING ON THE OPERAS, AND INDICATE WHETHER IT WOULD BE WILLING TO PUT MONEY IN THE PROJECT. EMBASSY FINDS PROJECT VERY ATTRACTIVE. UNLIKE VIRTUALLY EVERY OTHER WEST EUROPEAN COUNTRY, THE USG HAS NEVER REALLY CO-SPONSORED ANYTHING SUBSTANTIAL AT GULBENKIAN. SCOTT

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